Alberta
JUSTICE

Response to the Government of Alberta to the Final Report, Alberta Summit on Justice "Report Card" September 2000

Introduction

The Summit on Justice was convened in January 1999 to help make Alberta's good justice system better. Of the 151 delegates invited to the summit, 83 were randomly selected from across the province based on demographics such as gender, age, occupation and First Nations/Metis considerations. The other 68 were representatives from sectors with an interest in justice issues.

The final report of the summit was released on April 22, 1999. The report presented 25 core recommendations and eight themes, which summarize the 519 individual recommendations put forward at the summit.

The Summit on Justice challenged Albertans to come up with recommendations that will promote public confidence in the administration of justice. The Albertans who participated did so because of their commitment to helping create a better system.

The Alberta government is also committed to fulfilling its part of the bargain. Recommendations made by the summit delegates are the basis of the Alberta Justice three-year business plan. The department's annual report and performance measures ensure accountability.

The "report card" provides an update to Albertans on how the Justice Department is progressing on each of the themes identified by the summit delegates. Strategies are designated by an "A" (short term), "B" (mid term), or "C" (long term). A status update on each strategy is included.

At the Summit on Justice, Albertans spoke very clearly about their ideas to improve the justice system. The report card shows the Justice Department is listening and acting on those recommendations.

Theme One: Improve Public Knowledge, Education and Awareness
Theme Two: Simplify the Justice System
Theme Three: Increase Sensitivity and Cultural Awareness
Theme Four: Enhance Community Partnerships
Theme Five: Increase the Role of Victims
Theme Six: Clarify Accountability
Theme Seven: Take Action on Previous Studies and Reports on Justice
Theme Eight: Increase Funding

[Back to Top] [Next Theme]

Theme One: Improve Public Knowledge, Education, and Awareness

Strategy A1: Alberta Justice is developing a communications strategy to help inform Albertans about the justice system, to make information more accessible, and to provide a two-way mechanism for communication between Albertans and the department. Alberta Justice is exploring partnerships with the private sector to enhance public education for all Albertans and will have a strategy in place by fall 1999 to take to the private sector.

Status:

Complete ☐

In progress ☑

On hold ☐

A communications plan will be implemented in the 2000/01 fiscal year.

Strategy A2: Alberta Justice is developing a new and comprehensive website with a strong public awareness component. This site is expected to be online by the fall of 1999.

Status:

Complete ☑

In progress ☐

On hold ☐

Alberta Justice has developed a new and comprehensive justice website with a strong public awareness component. The Minister of Justice publicly launched the site on April 25, 2000.

Strategy A3: A new courts' website launched May 6, 1999 gives Albertans free and ready access to decisions of Alberta Court of Appeal and the Provincial Court of Alberta. Most decisions are posted within 4 hours of being filed. Judgments of the Court of Queen's Bench will be available on the site in the near future.

Status:

Complete ☐

In progress ☑

On hold ☐

The website has been implemented. The Court of Queen's Bench judgements are not posted yet. Queen's Bench Judiciary have been concerned with the compliance of their judgements with privacy laws. A legal review consultant has been hired to help with the issue. This person will be dealing with a backlog of judgements as well as new judgements, and the judgements will be posted on the web when the Queen's Bench judges are assured that no problems will arise from posting.

Strategy A4: Alberta's Crime Prevention Week is celebrated yearly to draw attention to community-based crime prevention programs and to honour citizens whose efforts have made a difference. Next year, more resources will be focused on this annual event. Alberta Justice will also be seeking partnerships with the private sector to broaden awareness of the event and of crime prevention initiatives in Alberta.

Status: *$600,000 in new funding for the Provincial Crime Prevention Strategy became*

Complete ☐
In progress ☑
On hold ☐

available April 1, 1999. Alberta Crime Prevention Week 2000 (ACPW) took place May 13 to 19, 2000. The communications strategy for ACPW 2000 was launched with the News Release of April 28, 2000 and the new Alberta Justice website. Partnerships were not possible during this year. Plans for ACPW 2001 will include actions to seek private sector partnerships.

Strategy B1: Alberta Justice will initiate discussion with organizations committed to justice issues, such as the Alberta Law Foundation; the Public Legal Education Network of Alberta; the John Howard Society; Alberta Learning; the federal government; and the private sector to find ways of better informing Albertans about the justice system.

Status:
Complete ☐
In progress ☑
On hold ☐

The communications plan will address discussion initiatives with outside stakeholders. Communications Division has hired an education coordinator to initiate these activities.

Strategy B2: Alberta Justice will initiate partnerships with the Provincial Court, the Edmonton Police Service, and the Canadian Bar Association to work with and support their school mentoring programs.

Status:
Complete ☐
In progress ☑
On hold ☐

The communications plan will address partnerships.

Strategy C1: Alberta Justice will approach Alberta Learning and the private sector to determine how justice education can be improved through curriculum change, the development of new resources and other joint strategies.

Status:
Complete ☐
In progress ☑
On hold ☐

The communications plan will address partnerships to examine possible curriculum changes.

[Back to Introduction] **[Next Theme]**

Theme Two: Simplify the Justice System

Strategy A1: Civil claims of under $7500 can now be dealt with in Small Claims Court, a much less formal process than the Court of Queen's Bench. This saves Albertans time and money. Consideration is being given to raising the limit to $10,000. This would reduce the number of cases that go to the Court of Queen's Bench. More Albertans would have their claims dealt with quickly, and they would not need the expensive documentation required for the Court of Queen's Bench.

Status:

Complete ☐

In progress ☑

On hold ☐

A feasibility study, which evaluates the increase in the limit of jurisdiction of the Civil Division to $7,500 and projects the effect of increasing the limit to $10,000 was completed. It recommended increasing the limit to $10,000 with the addition of some new resources to handle the increased workload. Implementation of these recommendations is still under consideration.

The Justice Statutes Amendment Act *(Bill 20) recommended that the* ***potential*** *civil claims limit for Provincial Court be raised from $10,000 to $25,000 through a future regulatory change. Increasing the* ***potential*** *court claims limit would provide an opportunity to further increase the actual limit in the future. Bill 20 was adjourned during second reading.*

Strategy A2: Alberta's Family Law Information Centres (formerly known as Child Support Centres) assist families that are undergoing divorce or separation. The centres provide help and guidance with understanding the federal child support guidelines. Alberta is working with other provinces to determine how the federal guidelines can be improved to better serve families.

Status:

Complete ☐

In progress ☑

On hold ☐

The evaluation of the current activities of the Family Law Information Centres has been completed and is currently under review by the department. The Unified Family Court Task Force that has been established will examine the services provided by the court in relation to family law. This will include the services provided by the Family Law Information Centres.

Strategy A3: Under the leadership of Madam Justice Trussler, Court of Queen's Bench, Alberta Justice is creating a series of 16 plain language family court booklets to enable Albertans to better understand and access the court with respect to child support matters. The booklets will assist Albertans who wish to represent themselves in changing an existing child support order. The booklets will be field-tested and will be available this fiscal year.

Status:

Complete ☑

In progress ☐

On hold ☐

After assessing needs, the number of booklets has increased to 29. These include booklets to assist individuals in obtaining protection orders under the Protection Against Family Violence Act *and ex parte restraining orders in family situations. The booklets are at the printer and should be ready for distribution in October.*

Strategy A4: A joint initiative between Alberta Justice, Government Services, and Infrastructure is underway to allow the payment of initial traffic ticket fines at private motor vehicle registries. Legislative and computer system changes are required to make this possible.

Status:

Complete ☐
In progress ☑
On hold ☐

Active discussions between the three departments to make this initiative a reality are continuing. Discussions include plans to make legislative changes to implement this initiative and detailed planning and development to be ready for scheduled implementation in December 2000. A commitment to make legislative changes in the spring of 2000 has been made by the Minister of Justice and draft legislation is near finalization. A requirements definition document which describes the process to be followed and the automated systems changes to be done is expected to be completed in 2000.

Strategy A5: The Court of Queen's Bench facilitates settlements on a voluntary basis through judicial dispute resolution and mini-trials. Both methods reduce the time and cost required to resolve court cases. In a mini-trial, following the conclusion of arguments, the judge provides a non-binding option that reflects what the judge believes would happen if the matter were to proceed to trial. Judicial dispute resolution (JDR) is a neutral evaluation process conducted by a judge to assist the parties in reaching a settlement.

Status:

Complete ☑
In progress ☐
On hold ☐

This strategy is continuing to be used. In both Edmonton and Calgary, two judges are assigned to carry out JDR conferences each week. 70% of cases settle, and in those that do not, the number of issues in dispute may be reduced and settlements may occur before trial. Chief Justice Moore indicates that this program has reduced time to trial in the Court of Queen's Bench.

Strategy A6: On September 1, 1998, courts in Edmonton began accepting debit and credit cards for payment of fines and fees. This is being expanded to the Calgary courts effective June 1, 1999 and the remaining courts in Alberta by January 1, 2000.

Status:

Complete ☑
In progress ☐
On hold ☐

All courts are able to accept payment of fines and Court fees with Interac, VISA, and MasterCard. This strategy was completed on schedule.

Strategy A7: Reduction in Surrogate Court Fees for letters of probate and administration.

Status:

Complete ☑

The reduction in fees was implemented on February 25, 2000. This reduction is expected to save users $3.3 million.

In progress ☐
On hold ☐

Strategy B1: The Civil Claims Mediation Pilot Project currently operating in Calgary and Edmonton will become an ongoing program. The project is a partnership of Alberta Justice Provincial Court and community based organizations, and provides mediation as an alternative to court proceedings. Seventy per cent of the claims referred to the project have been successfully resolved.

Status:
Complete ☑
In progress ☐
On hold ☐

The Mediation Pilot Project in Edmonton, which began as a pilot project in January 1998, became a permanent program in August 1999. An evaluation of the program was released in August 1999. The Civil Claims Mediation Program in Calgary, which began in September 1998, became a permanent program in September 1999. The programs provide mediation as an alternative to court proceedings. Seventy per cent of the claims referred to the program have been successfully resolved. Plans are to continue the program on a permanent basis. If the Provincial Court, Civil Division's limits are raised to $10,000 the programs can be expanded to handle more cases.

Strategy B2: A pilot project to address delays and cost issues will be introduced in the courts in Edmonton and Calgary. Judges will work with parties and their counsel to move cases through to completion in a timely and cost effective way.

Status:
Complete ☐
In progress ☑
On hold ☐

The pilot project requires significant investment in new information technology. Funding for this project has been included in the department's short-term and long-term funding requests.

Strategy B3: The Court of Appeal will adopt a total electronic appeal system that will include the electronic filing of court documents and video conferencing.

Status:
Complete ☐
In progress ☑
On hold ☐

The Management Information System is being studied. This system may create the basis for electronic filing in the future.

Strategy B4: Alberta Justice will work with the judiciary and Alberta Children's Services to improve access to family dispute resolution processes, and alleviate court delays.

Status:

Effective April 1, 2000, Family Mediation Services became part of Alberta

Complete ☐
In progress ☑
On hold ☐

Justice. It was formerly known as "Mediation Services" and was part of Alberta Children's Services. It provides mediation in child welfare cases and also in custody, access and maintenance cases to parties who meet its income qualifications. After the transfer of this service, a process to look at the mandate of Family Mediation Services will commence. Plans are also being made to expand the service.

Strategy B5: Crown prosecutors are developing procedures to resolve more criminal cases in the pre-trial stage, and to reduce the time it takes to get cases to trial.

Status:

Complete ☐
In progress ☑
On hold ☐

A case resolution project commenced on September 1, 1999 in the Edmonton Crown Office. The Lethbridge Crown Office is participating in a trial scheduling protocol initiated by Assistant Chief Judge Wood. Commitment and cooperation of police, defense bar and judiciary will be required.

An implementation plan is being developed to expand the existing initiatives and to develop pilot projects in other Crown Offices. Additional resources have been allocated to permit this expansion.

Strategy B6: Digital court reporting is being implemented to provide state-of-the-art digital recording technology for court testimony. This will improve overall efficiencies in information sharing, storage and rapid access to court transcripts. In addition, Albertans will pay less for transcripts and more dollars will be injected into court programs aimed at speeding up service to Albertans.

Status:

Complete ☑
In progress ☐
On hold ☐

The system was implemented in Alberta Courts July 1, 2000.

Strategy B7: The *Justice Statutes Amendment Act* is being prepared to enhance public access to the courts, to merge the Surrogate Court with the Court of Queen's Bench and increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the Provincial Court.

Status:

Complete ☐
In progress ☑
On hold ☐

The Act *was introduced in the Spring 2000 session of the Legislature.*

Strategy C1: A single family law forum to deal with family law matters will be explored in consultation with the judiciary and other stakeholders. The forum could include access to alternative dispute resolution processes as well as to the courts.

Status:

Complete ☐
In progress ☑
On hold ☐

A task force chaired by Marlene Graham, Q.C., MLA Calgary-Lougheed is consulting with Albertans and key stakeholders to recommend how access to Alberta courts can be improved for people with family law problems. The task force will provide the government with recommendations to simplify family court structures and enhance family services delivered through the courts. Following research and consultation, the task force will submit a final report to the Minister of Justice in December 2000.

Strategy C2: Standards will be put in place and staff training will be provided to ensure all Alberta Justice materials, including court documents and internal documents, will be in plain language.

Status:

Complete ☑
In progress ☐
On hold ☐

In spring 2000 Justice Communications provided plain language guidelines and Justice style guides to all divisions.

Strategy C3: Alberta Justice is working with Infrastructure to redevelop court facilities in Calgary. One of the objectives is to locate all the Calgary Courts in facilities that are in close proximity so all users can easily access services.

Status:

Complete ☐
In progress ☑
On hold ☐

Funding for design has been approved.

[Previous Theme] **[Back to Introduction]** **[Next Theme]**

Theme Three: Increase Sensitivity and Cultural Awareness

Strategy A1: Alberta Justice is discussing Metis issues with the Metis Nation of Alberta under a Protocol Agreement signed in 1996. Alberta Justice is also discussing justice issues with Canada and the Metis Nation of Alberta and the Metis Settlements General Council (MSGC) under two distinct tripartite agreements.

Status:

Complete ☐
In progress ☑
On hold ☐

The Alberta Department of Justice meets on an ongoing basis with the Metis Nation of Alberta under the Protocol Agreement and Tripartite Process Agreement and the MSGC under the Tripartite Agreement to discuss justice issues. During 1998/99 such discussions focused on accessing funding under the Federal Aboriginal Justice Strategy.

Strategy A2: A Metis Advisory Committee to Alberta Justice has been established with participation from the Metis Nation of Alberta and the Metis Settlements General Council to establish understanding and cooperation, and to address long-term strategic direction on Metis justice issues in Alberta. The Minister of Justice and Attorney General chairs the committee.

Status:

Complete ☐
In progress ☑
On hold ☐

The Metis Advisory Committee has been established and has held its first meeting. Members of the Metis Advisory Committee participated in a two-day workshop in January 2000 to identify priority Metis justice issues. These priority areas will be raised at the next meeting of the committee, which will then work on the development of a plan to address priority areas. One stated area of interest pertains to increased cultural awareness and sensitivity.

Strategy A3: Crown prosecutor offices have Native liaison prosecutors to help develop culturally sensitive approaches to prosecutions. Over the next year their mandate will be further developed to ensure these sensitivities are addressed.

Status:

Complete ☐

Aboriginal Liaison Prosecutors met in September 1999, along with representatives of other divisions, to share information about existing initiatives and develop others that will make prosecution service more sensitive to the needs of aboriginal individuals and their communities. This group met again in May 2000.

In progress ☑

On hold ☐

Work is underway on:

- *an Intranet site to allow prosecutors to share information respecting cases, programs and publications bearing on aboriginal criminal justice issues.*
- *a review of the aboriginal cultural understanding training presently available for prosecutors.*

A number of prosecutors have participated in existing cultural understanding programs. The level of participation is being monitored and steps taken to raise that level.

Strategy A4: A First Nations Advisory Committee to Alberta Justice is under consideration by the Treaty Tribal Councils.

Status:

Complete ☐

In progress ☐

On hold ☑

The draft agreement for a First Nations Forum on Justice is no longer under consideration. Treaty 8 First Nations of Alberta held a justice workshop in March, attended by the Deputy Minister and others, where the concept of a forum was endorsed. Treaty 8 has indicated they believe the forum should be by treaty area. Treaty 8 has also advised that it would welcome the opportunity to meet with the Minister to discuss justice issues, and is seeking a mutually agreeable date. Discussions between the Aboriginal Justice Initiatives Unit (AJIU) and Treaty 8 in July and August have focussed on a possible October meeting. The Aboriginal Justice Initiatives Unit has asked that Treaty 8 give as much notice as possible. Similar discussions on early meetings with Treaty 6 and 7 are underway. It should be noted that in March 2000, the Chief's Summit adopted a resolution endorsing a First Nation's Justice Forum. It should also be noted that Treaty 8 is not fully supportive of the Chief's Summit - so that is why the endorsement of the forum as achieved through the Treaty 8 Justice Workshop.

Strategy A5: Alberta Justice is continuing to work with First Nations that have expressed interest in becoming more involved with the court system. In January 1998, Provincial Court was moved from Gleichen into the Siksika First Nation courthouse on the Siksika Reserve.

Status:

Complete ☑

In progress ☐

On hold ☐

Judge Mandamin now sits at the court on the Siksika Nation. In addition to an Aboriginal judge, the court includes an Aboriginal prosecutor and clerk.

Strategy A6: Alberta Justice will work with the Tsuu T'ina Nation towards a First Nations Provincial Court project on the Tsuu T'ina Reserve. This initiative involves appointing a First Nation judge and prosecutor, and setting up a community-based peacemakers program

Status:

Complete ☐

In progress ☑

On hold ☐

A Provincial Court Judge was appointed in October 1999. Court sittings on the Tsuu T'ina Nation will begin October 6, 2000.

Strategy A7: Alberta Justice is a member of the Steering Committee for the Edmonton Urban Aboriginal Initiative. Other members include representatives from various provincial departments, the federal government, and business. In particular, the Initiative is spearheaded by the Aboriginal Authorities, including Treaties 6

and 8 and the Metis Nation of Alberta. The purpose of this Initiative is to coordinate the delivery of services to Aboriginal people living in the Edmonton area in order to more effectively meet their needs.

Status:

Complete ☐

In progress ☑

On hold ☐

This initiative received strong support from the Federal/Provincial Deputy Ministers in December 1999. The project may be considered as a model for other urban areas in the province, as a provincial Urban Aboriginal Initiative has been launched by the federal and provincial governments working in collaboration. Alberta Justice (AJUI) continues to be a member of the Edmonton Urban Aboriginal Initiative (EUAI) committee. It met on September 8th, 2000 to discuss structural development options and possible locations for the office of the EUAI Project Manager's office. The involvement of Alberta Justice will evolve as the initiative develops.

Strategy A8: Alberta Justice has a three-day Aboriginal cultural awareness program for employees to increase sensitivity to Aboriginal peoples and minimize culturally based misunderstandings. More than 2,688 employees have taken the program. Justice is committed to continuing to offer the program.

Status:

Complete ☐

In progress ☑

On hold ☐

Alberta Justice has identified the need to increase access to the program to Justice employees. In particular, the department hopes to facilitate the participation of greater numbers of Crown prosecutors in the workshop. As well, the department is currently exploring the possibility of expanding the cultural awareness training available to staff, and of making linkages with external entities who might assist in the development and delivery of suitable programs, and who might access them as well.

Strategy B1: Alberta Justice will work with the multi-cultural community and other stakeholders to adapt existing cultural awareness programs (e.g. Aboriginal programs) and help make them available to other justice-related organizations (for example, judges and the police).

Status:

Complete ☐

In progress ☑

On hold ☐

Alberta Justice is continuing to provide Aboriginal Awareness Programs for all its employees.

The department has contacted all municipal police services and offered to partner with them in delivering programs. Justice's Aboriginal Justice Initiative Unit has contacted the judiciary (Provincial Court and Court of Queen's Bench) and determined they are interested in Aboriginal awareness programs. Discussions are continuing on advancing this initiative.

Strategy B2: Alberta Justice will work with victims' groups and other stakeholders to develop a "victim awareness" program for justice employees, other professionals and victims' service providers.

Status:

Complete ☐

Alberta Justice currently provides a three-day training program for victim services coordinators. Components of this program (i.e. awareness and

In progress ☑ *sensitivity to victim issues) are being considered for adaptation to a one-day "Victim Awareness" Program. Plans are to partnership with victims groups and*
On hold ☐ *other stakeholders to determine program design and delivery. Program development and in particular delivery will pose a strain on existing resources.*

Strategy B3: Priority attention will be given to developing a community corrections agreement with the Maskwachees Justice Society at Hobbema, and additional crime prevention positions in Aboriginal communities.

Status:
Complete ☐ *Negotiations will continue with the Maskwachees Justice Society in the development of a Community Corrections service agreement, however one of the First Nations involved with the society has yet to commit to the proposal. The proposed Community Corrections Agreement will proceed only with the approval of all of the four First Nations. Correctional Services will continue in discussions as requested by the Society.*
In progress ☑
On hold ☐

Strategy C1: Alberta Justice will consult with First Nations and Metis organizations and other justice stakeholders to identify strategies for better informing Albertans about Aboriginal cultures and values in relation to the justice system.

Status:
Complete ☐ *These issues are being addressed through: a) the Metis Advisory Committee and its working group, the Metis Advisory Working Committee and; b) through meetings with Treaty 6,7 and 8 officials. The AJIU and staff college are working with a group of First Nations' officials on the development of specific cultural programs that would inform members of Alberta Justice initiatives. The next meeting, which will include elders and Treaty 6,7 and 8 officials is scheduled for late September 2000.*
In progress ☑
On hold ☐

[Previous Theme] **[Back to Introduction]** **[Next Theme]**

Theme Four: Enhance Community Partnerships

Strategy A1: Alberta Justice is working with regional children's services authorities to develop case management protocols in support of the Alberta children's initiative. Alberta Justice will continue to work closely with regional authorities to address the needs of troubled and delinquent children and identify future opportunities for closer collaboration.

Status:

Complete ☐

In progress ☑

On hold ☐

Case management protocols between Alberta Justice and Children's Services Regional Authorities have been drafted and distributed.

A consultation is now underway to ensure that the protocol documents adequately reflect the requirements of the proposed Youth Criminal Justice Act *and to identify potential service gaps and opportunities.*

Strategy A2: Alberta Justice is working with the regional children's services authorities, Alberta Health and Wellness, and First Nations and Metis groups to implement the federal Crime Prevention and Population Health Initiatives, aimed at coordinated early intervention and prevention for children at risk.

Status:

Complete ☐

In progress ☑

On hold ☐

The National Crime Prevention Initiative provides grants under the Community Mobilization Program for Crime Prevention programs targeting children, youth, women and Aboriginal people. Alberta Justice participates in the Joint Management Committee, which distributes funds to community groups for the development of crime prevention programs. As of May 2000, over $2.59 million has been allocated to Alberta by the Federal Minister of Justice to support community based crime prevention programs.

Justice is partnered with other ministries in the Children's Mental Health Initiative. Justice has been working with the Ministers of Health and Wellness, Learning, Children's Services, Community Development, and Human Resources and Employment to develop a Pre-Conception to Age Six Framework and Plan to propose a strategic direction that will advance healthy child development.

Programs and strategies to address Children's Mental Health needs are currently being implemented.

Strategy A3: Alberta Justice and Alberta Health and Wellness will develop joint initiatives to address the health needs of youth in custody. Particular focus is on reducing risk-taking behaviors and promoting wellness by supporting HIV / AIDS awareness, smoking reduction, nutrition and injury prevention initiatives.

Status:

Complete ☑

In progress ☐

On hold ☐

Young offender centres have developed partnerships at the local level with health authorities and community service providers to enhance the availability of offender focused educational information regarding issues relating to smoking, alcohol and drug addictions, FAS/FAE, youth sexuality and AIDS, Canada Food Guide, proper nutrition, and physical fitness.

Strategy A4: Alberta Justice is a member of the "Phase II Implementation Committee of the Child Prostitution Task Force and the Protection of Children Involved in Prostitution Act." The Act was proclaimed February 1, 1999. The committee was established in January 1998 to ensure action on the recommendations of the task force report.

Status:

Complete ☐

In progress ☑

On hold ☐

The department continues to participate as a partner in this initiative assisting in furthering recommendations of the task force report. A strategic plan has been developed and Justice is assisting in this process. Current priorities of the implementation committee include an examination of measures to address prostitution related issues unique to Aboriginal youth, substance abuse training for staff involved with youth prostitutes, and the provision of substance abuse counselling for prostitution involved youth.

In October 1999 a Charter challenge of the Protection of Children Involved in Prostitution Act *was initiated in Calgary. Justice put forward arguments in defense of this provincial legislation aimed at preventing children from engaging in prostitution activities. The Provincial Court decision found that the legislation violates some aspects of the Charter. The decision is being appealed.*

On behalf of police services, Alberta Justice has applied to have outstanding apprehension orders placed on CPIC. This has been granted. Alberta Justice participates on regional child prostitution committees in Edmonton and Calgary. As well, Alberta Justice is participating on a steering committee to oversee the development of education/prevention resource material relating to child prostitution.

Young offender centres provide awareness/prevention information and strategies to the female offender population regarding prostitution issues. Upon release, referrals are made to community agencies for support and employment assistance.

Strategy A5: Alberta Justice is a member of the new Forensic Psychiatry Program Council established by Alberta Health's Provincial Mental Health Advisory Board. The objective is to better coordinate and increase access to mental health services for offender.

Status:

Complete ☐

In progress ☑

The Mental Health Board of Alberta Health and Wellness is taking the lead on this initiative. Alberta Justice is continuing to participate in the board's review as they explore options for the management of the provincial forensic program. A draft report has just been received from the board and is now being reviewed by Justice. Feedback will be provided at the Forensic Program Review Steering Committee meeting later in March. Justice officials are participating with the Board and local interest groups that are interested in pursuing forensic diversion programs, being sensitive to the fact that the board holds the primary responsibility for these programs. An inter-ministry meeting to examine options for providing community based treatment for offenders and victims involved in domestic violence also took place recently.

The chief executive officer of the board has indicated that the board is

On hold ☐

continuing to review funding issues. In the interim, this ministry continues to subsidize funding for forensic services provided by the Calgary Regional Health Authority. It has historically been this ministry's position that funding for this program should be under the umbrella of Alberta Health and Wellness, where the expertise for setting and monitoring performance standards and for health program management resides. As such, Justice has been prepared in the past to transfer its existing dedicated contract dollars to the board for this purpose.

Strategy A6: Work with the Region 18 Children's Services Authority is underway to help establish youth justice committees in Metis Settlements. Two youth justice committees have been established in two settlements and Alberta Justice will continue to work with other interested communities.

Status:

Complete ☐

In progress ☑

On hold ☐

Information respecting the formation and operation of volunteer youth justice committees has been provided to Region 18 officials. The region has hired four justice coordinators and this initiative should serve to place increased focus on and local interest in justice programs generally. The creation of youth justice committees is dependent on local interest, however, Alberta Justice will continue to ensure that Region 18 is aware of the opportunities in this area and its willingness to assist communities in this regard.

Strategy A7: Alberta Justice and Community Development have initiated a two-year project to promote the involvement of young offenders in custody in community-based leisure and arts activities. In the coming year, the program will be expanded to include young offender participation in mentoring partnerships and community services such as lawn mowing and snow shoveling for seniors.

Status:

Complete ☐

In progress ☑

On hold ☐

On June 1, 1999 Community Coordinators commenced work at both the Calgary and Edmonton Young Offender Centres. This two-year pilot project runs from June 1, 1999 to May 31, 2001.

Strategy A8: Alberta Justice is working with Children's Services and AADAC to support the Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Fetal Alcohol Effects strategies in the Alberta Children's Initiative Business Plan, by educating young offenders about prevention. Justice initiatives will include printed material, young offender custody orientation lectures, offender counseling initiatives and staff training.

Status:

Complete ☑

In progress ☐

On hold ☐

As a result of this initiative with Children's Services and AADAC, as of May 1, 1999, all new staff working at provincial young offender custody centres now receive Fetal Alcohol Syndrome/Effects (FAS/FAE) training as part of their orientation. Information regarding FAS/FAE has been made available for young offenders within all young offender facilities.

In May 2000, twenty facilitators from across the province received training specific to FAS/FAE - its cause, its diagnosis and management of affected

clients within a correctional environment. They are responsible, in turn, to provide correctional facility line staff with orientation/training in this regard.

Strategy A9: The provincial strategy to combat organized crime became operational on April 1, 1999. This strategy is intended to make Alberta an inhospitable location for criminal organizations and predators. Through provincial funding, the Criminal Intelligence Service Alberta will provide support to joint force police operations that target organized criminal activities.

Status:

Complete ☑
In progress ☐
On hold ☐

The provincial Organized and Serious Crime strategy became operational April 1, 1999. CISA has re-located, outfitted the office and hired staff. Two joint forces operations have resulted in numerous individuals being charged. Four of these individuals have been convicted and sentenced, with three of the individuals receiving federal sentences. Three additional joint forces operations have received approval. The CISA continues to work towards the eight goals identified in the CISA 3-Year Business Plan. Its Annual Report was received in April 2000. Two organized crime prosecutor positions have been created and filled.

Strategy A10: Alberta Justice will work in partnership with the federal government on the National Community Safety and Crime Prevention Initiative to enhance community safety through public education, project development in local communities, and research and evaluation.

Status:

Complete ☐
In progress ☑
On hold ☐

There are four components to this strategy. A brief update on the two with most recent impact on Alberta follows: Community Mobilization Program (CMP): The Alberta Joint Management Committee has met four times to review applications. As of May 2000, 73 projects in Alberta have received funding, totaling over $2.59 million. On November 29 and 30, 1999, the JMC held a Strategic Planning Session to address gaps in service and future directions for the CMP in Alberta. The federal Minister of Justice has made funding announcements for 28 projects totaling $844,868.

Crime Prevention Investment Fund: Three projects in Alberta have received funding - Edmonton received funding for two projects totalling $900,000 over three years (Success by 6's Healthy Families and Classroom on Wheels). Calgary's Coordinated Domestic Violence Project also received funding in excess of $900,000 over four years.

Strategy A11: Alberta Justice will continue to work with police services to promote community policing and develop measurements to identify its effectiveness.

Status:

Alberta Justice is working in partnership with policing stakeholders to develop policing standards and performance measures to enhance professional policing practices. The Deputy Minister of Justice is chairing a steering committee to oversee this initiative. Committee members include representatives from the:

- *Alberta Association of Chiefs of Police;*

Complete ☐

In progress ☑

- *Alberta Association of First Nation Chiefs of Police*
- *Alberta Association of Municipal Police Commissions;*
- *Alberta Federation of Police Associations;*
- *Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties;*
- *Alberta Urban Municipalities Association;*
- *Calgary Police Service;*
- *Calgary Police Commission;*
- *Edmonton Police Service;*
- *Edmonton Police Commission;*
- *First Nation Police Commissions;*
- *Law Enforcement Review Board;*
- *Metis Settlements;*
- *Public Security Division, Alberta Justice; and*
- *Royal Canadian Mounted Police.*

On hold ☐

MLAs LeRoy Johnson and Wayne Jacques have also been appointed as members of the steering committee to represent the Alberta public. A working committee has been formed to assist the steering committee. The working committee's mandate includes establishing a benchmark for the delivery of policing services in Alberta; developing policing standards consistent with the established benchmark; and developing the criteria and the means by which a police service's performance in meeting these standards can be measured.

The initiative was commenced with the first steering committee meeting in November 1999. It is anticipated that the policing standards, performance measures and an implementation plan will be completed by April 1, 2001.

Strategy B1: Alberta Justice will continue to partner with Alberta Health and Wellness, Alberta Children's Services and Alberta Learning to develop a child abuse protocol handbook. The handbook defines the responsibilities of professionals in reporting and investigating cases of child abuse and recommends ways to minimize additional trauma on children.

Status:

Complete ☑

In progress ☐

On hold ☐

The ministries of Learning, Health and Wellness, Justice and Children's Services have worked together to develop a provincial framework for addressing child abuse. Partnering Ministries have approved a handbook entitled "Responding to Child Abuse" and it has been distributed. Train the Trainers sessions with respect to the handbook were conducted by partnering ministries in regions throughout Alberta in October/November 1999. Attending the sessions were representatives from schools, health authorities, Child and Family Services Authorities and justice personnel including police services, crown prosecutors, young offender staff and probation officers.

Strategy B2: Alberta Justice is working in partnership with interested stakeholders to develop effective crime prevention strategies. Initiatives include funding community-based crime prevention projects, increasing public education and the development of resource materials, and expanding "best practice" models of crime prevention province wide. An additional $600,000 has been added to the crime prevention program.

Status:

Complete ☐

In progress ☑

On hold ☐

On December 1, 1999, the Justice Minister announced the provincial strategy, Focus on Crime Prevention - A Strategy for Alberta. *The new strategy set aside $400,000 for more public education on how to prevent crime, program enhancements in Models of Practice and Aboriginal initiatives, and a $200,000 Crime Prevention Grant Fund. On May 17, 2000, the Minister of Justice announced that 65 crime prevention projects were approved for provincial funding. These innovative projects are located in municipalities across the province*

Alberta Crime Prevention Week 2000 (ACPW) took place May 13 to 19, 2000. The communications strategy for ACPW 2000 was launched with a news release on April 28, 2000. ACPW is included in the new Alberta Justice website at www.gov.ab.ca/just/crimeprev.

Strategy B3: Alberta Justice will hold a conference early next year (2000) to discuss economic crime issues particularly organized crime. This conference will bring together many community partners such as Alberta Securities Commission, the Canadian Bankers' Association and the police.

Status:

Complete ☑

In progress ☐

On hold ☐

Alberta Justice hosted a three-day economic crime conference in Calgary, January 19-21, 2000. Over 100 delegates attended. This conference marked the first time that police officers, prosecutors, accountants, bankers and representatives of regulatory agencies in Alberta have come together to talk about economic crime and how to work together to deal with it. Participation in the conference provided an excellent opportunity to form new partnerships and re-establish old ones. The conference also provided the delegates with a wealth of information about recent developments in the law, particularly in relation to the sharing of information and the ability of organizations interested in this area to work together.

Strategy B4: Alberta Justice will continue to work with interested communities to establish youth justice committees. Consideration will be given to providing support to, and expanding the role of, the committees.

Status:

Complete ☐

In progress ☑

On hold ☐

There are currently 81 designated youth justice committees in Alberta. Alberta Justice has provided guidance and assistance to communities that express an interest in developing a committee and will continue to do so.

Strategy B5: Alberta Justice will work with the Legal Aid Society of Alberta and the Law Society of Alberta to develop strategies to improve the provision of legal aid services to Albertans. Further information will be publicly released as strategies are developed.

Status:

Complete ☐

In progress ☑

On hold ☐

How to improve the provision of legal aid services to Albertans is one of the issues raised in the context of the funding and tariff discussions among the Law Society of Alberta, the Legal Aid Society of Alberta and Alberta Justice. To assist in the resolution of these issues all three parties participated in a mediation process. Specific strategies to improve the provision of legal aid services to Albertans will be dependent upon the nature of the resolution of all these issues.

Strategy C1: Alberta Justice will identify the concerns and issues related to the police complaint processes at both the provincial and federal level and develop a plan to address these concerns.

Status:

Complete ☐

In progress ☑

On hold ☐

On February 4, 2000, the Justice Minister announced the appointment of a MLA committee, chaired by Ms. Judy Gordon, MLA Lacombe-Stettler, to conduct a review of the "Police Act." The two other committee members are Mr. Wayne Jacques, MLA Grande Prairie-Wapiti, and Ms. Heather Forsythe, MLA Calgary-Fish Creek. The specific mandate of the MLA committee is to "conduct a public consultation respecting the need for changes to the Alberta Police Act and to make recommendations for legislative change to the Minister of Justice and Attorney General based on the results of the consultation process." This consultation process will seek input from Albertans on recommendations to improve police complaint processes. Because RCMP complaint processes are governed by federal legislation, we intend to share the results of the consultations specific to police complaint processes with the federal government so that the views, concerns and recommendations of Albertans can also be considered by the federal Solicitor General.

The consultation process will commence in the near future and it is anticipated that changes to the legislation will be ready for tabling in the 2001 Spring Session of the Legislature.

Strategy C2: Alberta Justice will pursue private-sector partnerships to promote crime prevention initiatives, for example victim services campaigns and Crime Prevention Week.

Status:

Complete ☐

In progress ☑

The Justice Minister announced the province-wide expansion of a crime prevention booklet for persons with disabilities, which was pioneered by the Calgary Police Service in partnership with Canadian Pacific Railways. The booklet will be produced in cooperation with these partners and will be available in printed format as well as audio and braille. During the 1999 Alberta Crime Prevention Week (ACPW), the Wise Owls program from the Heads-Up Fraud Prevention Association in Edmonton was launched in Calgary by the Calgary Police Service and the Lethbridge Police Service announced plans to bring the program to Lethbridge. Wise Owls is a crime prevention program that educates seniors about fraud and fraud prevention. Alberta Community Crime Prevention Association (ACCPA) held eight Armed Robbery Prevention Seminars for the business sector across the province during the week. Local police services, ACCPA, Mac's stores and Voxcom sponsored the seminars. A total of 1,300 people, primarily employers and employees that handle money, attended the seminars.

On hold ☐ *Subway Restaurants sponsor an annual Victim Services Day Subway Challenge to increase awareness of services provided by police-based programs in Northern Alberta. A portion of proceeds from the sale of Subway sandwiches for the day is donated to local victim service units. In 1999, $63,155.00 was donated to victim service programs in the province. This year, Justice Minister Dave Hancock took part in Subway's Victim Services Day on April 27, 2000.*

Strategy C3: Alberta Justice will work with law enforcement agencies to review the feasibility of establishing a single-site, multi-use police training facility.

Status:

Complete ☐

In progress ☑ *This issue is being examined jointly by Alberta Justice and the Alberta Association of Chiefs of Police via the Association's Provincial Recruitment and Training Standardization Steering Committee. This committee has already overseen the development of a written communications test and a cognitive abilities test for police recruits. The committee is also in the process of finalizing the development of a police recruit applicant tracking system.*

On hold ☐ *The feasibility of developing a single site training facility continues be to be examined. A final decision regarding this matter is pending a further review of all relevant considerations.*

[Previous Theme] **[Back to Introduction]** **[Next Theme]**

Theme Five: Increase the Role of Victims

Strategy A1: The *Victims of Crime Act* was proclaimed and implemented on November 1, 1997. Further improvements to the *Act*, its regulations and its operating procedures will be identified in order to enhance and expand services to victims.

Status:

Complete ☐

In progress ☐

On hold ☑

A review of the Victims of Crime Financial Benefits program was initiated prior to the Alberta Summit on Justice. The original intent of the review was to streamline program processes and provide clarity without causing any significant changes to the scope or purpose of the program. A comprehensive review of the injury schedule in the Regulations was conducted with assistance from the Alberta Medical Association. A number of other legislative and regulatory amendments were also identified to improve Financial Benefit program service to applicants and streamline the program administrative processes. During the course of this program review, analysis of several of the Alberta Justice Summit recommendations respecting other services to victims indicated a need to expand the scope of the review. The proposed legislative and regulatory changes were deferred to accommodate this expanded scope.

Strategy A2: The *Protection Against Family Violence Act* came into force June 1, 1999. The legislation enables police to remove perpetrators of family violence from the home and ensures emergency protection orders are available on a 24-hour basis.

Status:

Complete ☑

In progress ☐

On hold ☐

The Protection Against Family Violence Act *came into effect on June 1, 1999. Regulations were passed, training occurred and evaluators were contracted. Interim evaluation is underway. Emergency Protection Orders and Queen's Bench Protection Orders have been granted for claimants in various parts of the province. Terms of a protection order, which allow exclusive occupation of the family home, are not enforceable on reserves. Band by-laws are needed. The federal government has been informed of this.*

Strategy A3: The Alternative Measures Program is an effective alternative to the formal justice process for a selected group of minor offenders, and will be expanded where appropriate. Serious and violent offenders will continue to be prosecuted through the formal court process. The program will permit more resources to be focused on serious and violent offenders.

Status:

Complete ☐

In progress ☑

On hold ☐

The Young Offender Alternative Measures Program was expanded in the fall of 1996. The Adult Alternative Measures Program was created in February of 1997. It is now timely, given the subsequent findings of the Alberta Justice Summit, developments in the area of restorative justice, and the anticipated passage of the Youth Criminal Justice Act, *that a review of these programs be conducted. The Serious and Violent Crime Committee has accepted the task of conducting this review to find ways to make these programs more effective. A sub-committee has been formed made up of Alberta Justice officials together with representatives of police agencies.*

Strategy A4: Programs that provide information, assistance, education and support to victims during the criminal justice process will continue to receive funding priority under the *Victims of Crime Act.*

Status:

Complete ☐

In progress ☑

On hold ☐

An appointed committee consisting of representation from police, government and the community meet twice yearly to evaluate applications for grants for programs that benefit victims of crime.

In 1999/00, 57 grants totaling $1,285,119 were recommended by the committee and approved for funding by the Minister. This represents a 35.5% increase over grants awarded in 1998/99. 84.1% of total grant monies were allocated to police based victim service programs to provide information, assistance and support to victims.

Programs approved for funding enter into agreements and provide program statistics on a quarterly basis. A status report that provides information about grants and program activity is published annually. The 1998-1999 Status Report was tabled in the Legislature by the Minister. The 1999-2000 report is currently being prepared.

Strategy A5: A new Bail: Victims of Serious Domestic Violence Notification and Protection Guideline will enable Alberta Justice and the police to notify the victim in cases where the accused will be released and poses a threat to the victim. It will be finalized shortly.

Status:

Complete ☐

In progress ☑

On hold ☐

In July of 1999 Alberta Justice announced a guideline for Crown prosecutors and the police to provide greater protection to victims of serious domestic violence. The guideline provided for notification of bail status to such victims, with the process based on either the request of the victim or upon risk flagging. It dealt with such matters as a flagging system to determine risk; risk factoring; special case assignment of Crown Prosecutors; and follow up to ensure that risk to the victim is being minimized. An interim evaluation to ensure implementation is proceeding has been completed. A final evaluation is underway.

Strategy B1: Alberta Justice will consult with the federal government and stakeholder groups to ensure Alberta's Victim Impact Statement Program policy reflects *Criminal Code* provisions and is implemented appropriately.

Status:

Complete ☑

In progress ☐

On hold ☐

Victim Impact Statement Program procedures and materials have been modified to reflect amendments to section 722 of the Criminal Code of Canada. Alberta Justice officials worked closely with law enforcement agencies and the Alberta police-based Victim Services Association in the course of modifying procedures to comply with the new Criminal Code requirements. Training on the new procedures was provided to Crown Prosecutors and victim service unit staff during victim awareness training programs held March 20-24, 2000 at the Staff College in Edmonton.

Strategy B2: A new funding model for victims program grants will be developed to ensure fair and equitable funding for victim services programs. Longer term funding will be included where appropriate.

Status:

Complete ☑

In progress ☐

On hold ☐

After consulting with police and victim service programs, a new funding formula was developed and implemented October 1, 1999. The formula is based upon volume of violent crime in an area as reported by police in uniform crime reports. Under this formula, areas of the province with a higher volume of crime are eligible to receive more funding. As well as the base-funding amount, programs that have special needs or unique characteristics can apply for additional funding. Also, programs that have partnered with Alberta Justice for a minimum of three years and met the terms of past funding agreements are eligible for longer term funding commitments.

Strategy B3: In collaboration with police and victim service providers, Alberta Justice is providing victims with information about how they can apply for offender-pay restitution. Guidelines for the program will be developed. The amount of restitution ordered by the court will be monitored on an annual basis.

Status:

Complete ☑

In progress ☐

On hold ☐

The Requesting Restitution Program was developed in the fall of 1996. The program allows individuals who have suffered a financial loss as a result of a crime to seek restitution from the offender. After the program was piloted for two years, it became evident that guidelines would assist Justice staff and victim services personnel in delivering the program. The Requesting Restitution Program Guidelines have been finalized and are ready for distribution. Program materials are being revised and will be distributed with the Guidelines before October 30, 2000.

A new computer program would have to be developed to report on the amount of restitution ordered by the court. This is a longer-term consideration.

Strategy C1: Alberta Justice will review relevant legislation and policy from a victims' perspective, identify existing rights, and make recommendations for change to ensure a more meaningful role for victims.

Status:

Complete ☐

In progress ☑

On hold ☐

A departmental committee has been established to review existing legislation and department services with a view to recommending changes to give victims a more meaningful role in the justice system. The committee is currently in the process of comparing Alberta victims' legislation to legislation from other Canadian jurisdictions to identify possible recommendations for change. Once this review is complete, the committee intends to share the results with representatives from victims' groups/associations, individual victims and other stakeholders and to conduct a number of structured focus group discussions with these victims' stakeholders to solicit further input on possible recommendations for change. A report containing the recommendations resulting from both the internal review and the focus group discussions will be submitted to the Minister for consideration. It is hoped this report will be complete before year-end.

Strategy C2: The Crown office in Calgary is using public assistance officers to respond to the needs of victims during the time a case is being prepared and brought to trial, and following the trial. Alberta Justice will expand the program to other Crown offices across the province.

Status:

Complete ☐

In progress ☑

On hold ☐

The Calgary Public Assistance Unit continues to serve the needs of victims and a project has been established in the Edmonton Crown Office. Additional resources have been allocated to these two projects to enable them to continue. A training strategy will be developed for support staff assisting the public in the other Crown offices outside Edmonton and Calgary.

[Previous Theme] **[Back to Introduction]** **[Next Theme]**

Theme Six: Clarify Accountability

Strategy A1: As of January 1999 a one-year pilot project is underway to collect overdue Criminal Code fines ordered by the Edmonton courts. The project collected $70,000 in February. If the project continues to be successful it will be expanded province wide.

Status:

Complete ☐
In progress ☑
On hold ☐

The collection of criminal code fines remains an important social responsibility, which enhances the integrity of the criminal justice system and acts as a deterrent to unlawful behaviors such as theft, prostitution, public mischief and possession of drugs. Fines collection has been expanded province wide. Approximately $3 to $4 is being collected for each $1 spent on the project.

Strategy A2: A number of new alternatives to custody have been introduced for low risk offenders who can safely be supervised in the community. These initiatives have allowed resources to be targeted at higher risk offenders, and are in keeping with federal legislative changes and this government's focus on serious and violent crime. These programs are being monitored for effectiveness and efficiency and will be modified where appropriate.

Status:

Complete ☐
In progress ☑
On hold ☐

Utilization and effectiveness of the Attendance Centre programs (Surveillance Supervision, House Arrest, and Conditional Sentence Curfew Monitoring) continue to be monitored on an ongoing basis. Limited modifications are implemented as required.

In February 2000, Youth Attendance Centre Program pilots began operation in Calgary and Edmonton. These community-based day programs will provide enhanced supervision and support to higher risk young offenders who are serving a term of probation or are awaiting further court appearances. This pilot program is intended to support the policy objectives of the yet to be proclaimed Youth Criminal Justice Act *and will support Alberta Justice objectives of providing additional support and supervision to offenders resident in the community.*

Strategy A3: Alberta Justice is operating satellite work camps. These are minimum-security facilities, which provide a non-traditional correctional setting for selected low-risk offenders who provide community service work to local communities, non-profit organizations and government agencies. Some camps are operated on our behalf under contract by Aboriginal organizations.

Status:

Complete ☐

Discussions are ongoing with the Dene Tha' First Nation respecting their assumption and operation of the Footner Lake Minimum Security Camp. Initial training of the Dene Tha' Board Members (Tu Gadi Community Outreach Society) have been completed. The Peace River Correctional Centre Director will meet with the Board twice monthly to effect the eventual transfer and operation of the Camp.

In progress ☑

Discussions continue with the Peigan First Nation respecting the transfer of the Westcastle Minimum Security Camp to the First Nation. A tour of Westcastle

On hold ☐

Camp by members of the Peigan First Nation, Native Counselling Services and the Director of the Lethbridge Correctional Centre was conducted on December 7, 1999. The tour included a survey of the site and discussions with camp staff. Negotiations will be going on with the Peigan First Nation regarding their proposal to take over the operation of the Westcastle Camp and associated offender programs. At this time there is no tentative date for the transfer to take place. These efforts continue to support the objective of expanding partnerships between Alberta Justice and the Aboriginal community.

Strategy A4: Alberta Justice will continue to focus resources on serious and violent youth crime, and to use the young offender Alternative Measures Program where appropriate. Practical work experience and community work programs for young offenders in centres, camps and group homes will be increased.

Status:

Complete ☐

In progress ☑

The department continues to explore opportunities to ensure that services and programs are appropriate to diverting less serious offenders from the formal justice system (e.g. Alternative Measures Program) and to maximize opportunities for offenders to engage in work activity. In addition, the department continues its focus on ensuring the availability of rehabilitative programs targeting serious offenders, e.g. sex offender counselling programs.

On hold ☐

The diversion of less serious offenders from the formal justice system and a focus on ensuring the availability of resources for serious and violent youth will be examined in the context of the new federal Youth Criminal Justice Act.

Strategy B1: Alberta Justice will examine ways to increase diversion programs and restorative justice in appropriate criminal cases. A strategic plan for the identified initiatives will be publicly released by fall 1999.

Status:

Restorative justice is a philosophy for understanding crime and resolving conflict, and focuses on attempting to address the harm that has resulted from an offence. In February 2000, Cabinet approved a draft Community Justice Policy as phase II of the Alberta Justice Serious and Violent Crime Initiative. The draft policy commits Alberta Justice to working in partnership with communities, other levels of government and other government departments to make restorative justice processes widely available in the province.

Complete ☐

A stakeholder consultation process has commenced to:

- *begin a process of community/staff education as to restorative justice processes;*
- *identify staff/community issues or concerns regarding restorative justice;*
- *promote staff/community awareness of and support for restorative justice;*
- *begin the process of establishing community partnerships;*
- *validate the draft Alberta Community Justice Policy; and*
- *identify Community Justice Policy implementation strategies.*

In progress ☑

The department will continue to ensure that serious, violent and habitual

On hold ☐

offenders are identified early in the justice process and that they are prosecuted to the fullest extent. The Community Justice Policy, as phase II of the Serious and Violent Crime Initiative, will help to prevent crime by providing more options for offenders to take responsibility for their actions and to be held directly accountable to those who have been harmed by their actions. Furthermore, this policy will ensure that victims, should they choose, will have the opportunity to be more directly involved in the justice process. This will allow them to communicate their concerns, have questions answered and help determine what the consequences of the criminal behaviour will be.

It is anticipated that the stakeholder consultations will be completed over the spring / summer so that the restorative justice implementation strategies that flow from the consultation process can be put into place in the fall.

Strategy B2: In the area of youth crime, Alberta Justice will liaise with the federal government to develop and implement proposals passed under the federal government's new youth justice strategy.

Status:

Complete ☐

Alberta Justice officials from Criminal Justice and Corrections Divisions have been working with federal officials on the new youth justice strategy and particularly the Youth Criminal Justice Act *(Bill C-3). Alberta Justice, along with other provinces and territories has conveyed a number of suggestions and concerns about the Bill to the federal government, not the least of which is the issue of appropriate cost sharing.*

In progress ☑

Alberta, in recognition that the Bill is very likely to pass, has adopted a co-operative approach and commenced work on implementation. A steering committee of Assistant Deputy Ministers is supervising the activities of an Alberta Justice Working Group that is tasked with this project. Alberta has asked that the Youth Criminal Justice Act *not be proclaimed in force less than one year after it has passed in order to allow for proper implementation. This will involve training, systems changes, new forms, new programs, and new procedures and guidelines. All those involved in the Youth justice System will be affected. Of particular note is recent conferences held in Banff, Edmonton and Calgary, which included participation by police, Crown and defence lawyers, corrections, First Nations, Metis, and youth justice committees to introduce them to the many changes that will impact upon them as a result of this new legislation.*

On hold ☐

Strategy B3: Alberta Justice supports the transfer of programs and services to Aboriginal communities where workloads warrant, where the communities have expressed a desire to assume the programs, and where the communities have shown the capacity to manage the programs. These initiatives will be undertaken in consultation with First Nation and Metis people of Alberta.

Status:

Complete ☐

The Metis Advisory Committee (MAC) met with the Minister on March 15, 2000 and decided that a Metis Advisory Working Committee (MAWC) supported by the Aboriginal Justice Initiatives unit and comprised of officials from the Metis and Alberta Justice Divisions be formed. This committee met June 7 and July 17 and will report on its work to MAC. The Chiefs of the three Treaty areas

In progress ☑

On hold ☐

have agreed in principle, through correspondence from the Treaty 8 Justice portfolio holder, and by a resolution of the Chief's Summit in March 2000 that a forum should be established with the Minister to address Justice issues. The Aboriginal Justice Initiatives Unit is working with officials from the Treaty areas to arrange the initial meeting(s) with the Minister.

Strategy C1: Consideration is being given to creating a custody diversion program in Calgary similar to the diversion program currently operating in Edmonton. In light of the federal Justice minister's recently tabled youth justice legislation, this review has been expanded to consider the impact of this new legislation on the ministry's full range of diversion initiatives.

Status:

Complete ☐

In progress ☑

A complete review of the programs for youth involved in the justice system is being conducted in light of the new Youth Criminal Justice Act. *The federal government wants to reduce the use of custody by placing additional legislated barriers on its use and by providing additional non-custody sentence options. The federal government and justice summit recommendations subscribe to increasing the focus on community alternatives to custody. The resources previously targeted for the Custody Diversion Program expansion in Calgary may be more appropriately directed at these types of direct community services and this issue is currently under review.*

On hold ☐

In February 2000, Youth Attendance Centre Program pilots began operation in Calgary and Edmonton. These community based day programs will provide enhanced supervision and support to higher risk young offenders who are serving a term of probation or are awaiting further court appearances. This pilot program is intended to support the policy objectives of the yet to be proclaimed Youth Criminal Justice Act *and will support Alberta Justice objectives of providing additional support and supervision to offenders resident in the community.*

Strategy C2: Alberta Justice will evaluate and determine, in conjunction with interested justice stakeholders, how to address concerns raised by delegates with respect to accountability in sentencing, parole practices, judicial decisions and police discipline.

Status:

Complete ☐

In progress ☑

On hold ☐

This strategy was discussed with the Justice Police Advisory committee. With respect to accountability in Judicial decisions, the committee suggested that an effective communications strategy, like the one that is being developed by Alberta Justice, should assist with providing the public with information needed to understand various decisions and how cases are interpreted. The judiciary advised that they have a media committee that allows for the exchange of information with respect to how cases are portrayed in the media.

[Previous Theme] **[Back to Introduction]** **[Next Theme]**

Theme Seven: Take Action on Previous Studies and Reports on Justice

Strategy A1: Alberta Justice is working with stakeholders to review and implement the approved recommendations of the MLA Review Committee on the Maintenance Enforcement Program and Child Access. One of the recommendations involved examining ways to improve how family law disputes are dealt with.

Status:

Complete ☐
In progress ☑
On hold ☐

An MLA task force to recommend how access to Alberta courts can be improved for people with family law problems has been formed. The task force will provide the government with recommendations to simplify family court structures and enhance family services delivered through the courts. Following research and consultation, the task force will submit a final report to the Minister of Justice.

On April 1, 2000 Family Mediation Services became part of Alberta Justice. It was formerly known as "Mediation Services" and was part of Children's Services. It provides mediation in Child Welfare cases and also in custody, access and maintenance cases, to parties who meet its income qualifications. After the transfer of this service, a process to consider the mandate of Family Mediation Services will commence. Plans are also being made to expand the service.

Strategy A2, A3: Legislation to improve the enforcement of child access orders was passed in Spring 1999. This legislation will include remedies to encourage family members to work out their problems cooperatively through education, parenting after separation courses and mediation.

Status:

Complete ☑
In progress ☐
On hold ☐

The Family Law Statutes Amendments Act 1999 *was passed in the 1999 Spring sitting of the Alberta Legislature. The* Act *gives jurisdiction to both the Court of Queen's Bench and the Provincial Court to enforce access orders and provides a standard list of remedies that can be requested when an access order is breached. The range of remedies provided includes counseling, mediation, fines, imprisonment, and orders to police to assist in enforcing access. Since the Bill has passed, an implementation team has developed the necessary regulation, court forms, and information packages including a comprehensive public information package that assists people attempting to enforce their court orders without help from a lawyer. Proclamation of the legislation was on April 19, 2000.*

The second part of strategy A3 has been moved to a longer-term strategy C1.

Strategy A4: Alberta Justice has changed the appointment process for Provincial Court judges to reflect a majority of the recommendations of the task force on judicial selection. Legislative amendments have been passed to establish term appointments for the chief judges and the assistant chief judges of the Provincial Court. A Provincial Court Nominating Committee to recommend appointments of Provincial Court Judges has been established.

Status: *A committee has been established and has met and made recommendations*

Complete ☐
In progress ☑
On hold ☐

for appointments as Provincial Court judges. This strategy is fully implemented.

Strategy A5

A consultation plan to follow up with First Nations on the recommendations from the *First Nations Police Services in Alberta Review* has been approved. The review assessed the effectiveness of First Nations police services and recommended changes the authors considered appropriate. The Standardization of Recruitment and Training Committee is developing acceptable standards for municipal and First Nation Police Services in Alberta.

Status:

Complete ☐
In progress ☑
On hold ☐

Alberta First Nations Police Services are currently involved in two policing standards initiatives. One initiative pertains specifically to the development of recruitment and training standards for Alberta municipal and First Nation Police Services. This is a joint effort of Alberta Justice and the Alberta Association of Chiefs of Police (AACP). In 1998/99, Alberta Justice agreed to fund the development of a police recruit written communications test, a cognitive abilities test and an applicant tracking system. The written communications test and the cognitive abilities test have been purchased / developed and the applicant tracking system is now being finalized under the direction of the AACP's Provincial Recruitment and Training Standardization Steering Committee. This committee is also studying the feasibility of developing a single site training facility.

First Nations Police Services are also actively involved with Alberta Justice and other stakeholders in the development of Alberta policing standards. Further details regarding this initiative are contained under Theme Four, Strategy A11.

Strategy B1:

Alberta Justice will work with the Metis Justice Advisory Committee to develop an action plan for recommendations in previous reports which have as yet gone unaddressed. The Advisory Committee was created in response to one of the recommendations in the *Cawsey Task Force Report* as well as in response to recommendations in the *Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples*. These strategies will be included in future Alberta Justice business plans. A similar process will be undertaken with the First Nation Advisory Committee when the committee has been established.

Status:

Complete ☐
In progress ☑
On hold ☐

The involvement of First Nations and Metis groups in the administration of Criminal Justice is being carried out collectively through the Advisory Committees and with individual groups as required. The Metis Advisory Committee will meet next in March 2000. A draft agreement entitled the First Nations/Province of Alberta Forum on Policing and Justice has been developed, and formal approval from the chiefs of the First Nations and Alberta Justice is being sought. The chiefs of Treaty 8 have made a request for funding to hold a justice conference in the near future in order to discuss their participation in the Forum. The Forum remains to be established.

Development of an appropriate indicator for Aboriginal involvement in the

criminal justice system is outstanding. The development of such an indicator through the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics will be a long-term initiative. In the short-term, a review of current departmental indicators will be undertaken.

Strategy B2: Alberta Justice will review with First Nation and Metis groups their involvement in the administration of criminal justice. They will also review issues relating to the court system, develop an appropriate indicator for Aboriginal involvement in the criminal justice system, and participate in the government-wide Aboriginal policy framework.

Status:

Complete ☐

In progress ☑

On hold ☐

In August 1999 Alberta Justice expressed support for the Aboriginal Policy Framework, which would establish a framework for addressing Aboriginal issues by the Province of Alberta. This framework (which has not yet been formally approved, pending community consultations) has precipitated a cross-government priority for the year 2000-2001 called the Aboriginal Policy Initiative. This Initiative will require various provincial departments to address Aboriginal issues that are relevant to the business conducted, by each department. Alberta Justice is one of the four departments championing this initiative. The department will be initiating its own response immediately.

This strategy was previously part of strategy A3.

Strategy C1: Legislative changes with respect to the consolidation of family law have been scheduled for spring 2002.

Status:

Complete ☐

In progress ☑

On hold ☐

Alberta Justice is reviewing the substantive areas of family law that have been identified for reform by the Alberta Law Reform Institute, MLA committees and the Justice Summit. The project will make recommendations for law reform and consolidation and rationalization of family law legislation in Alberta. This will include a review of custody and access, spousal support and child support. Alberta Justice, Children's Services, and Human Resources are participating as each of these ministries has responsibility for private family law reform legislation. It is anticipated that resulting family law reform legislation, substantive and process-related, could be introduced in the Legislature in 2002.

[Previous Theme] **[Back to Introduction]** **[Next Theme]**

Theme Eight: Increase Funding

Strategy A1: Additional funding ($2.5 million) has been identified in the current business plan for the Provincial Organized Crime Strategy and will go toward the establishment of the Criminal Intelligence Service Alberta (CISA).

Status:

Complete ☑

In progress ☐

On hold ☐

The provincial Organized and Serious Crime strategy became operational April 1, 1999. CISA has re-located, outfitted the office and hired staff. Two joint forces operations have resulted in numerous individuals being charged. Four of these individuals have been convicted and sentenced, with three of the individuals receiving federal sentences. Three additional joint forces operations have received approval. CISA continues to work towards the eight goals identified in the CISA three-year Business Plan. Its Annual Report was received in April 2000. Two organized crime prosecutor positions have been created and filled.

Strategy A2: Alberta Justice allocated $600,000 out of the existing budget for the enhanced Alberta Crime Prevention Program.

Status:

Complete ☑

In progress ☐

On hold ☐

New funding for the Provincial Crime Prevention Strategy became available April 1, 1999. Alberta Crime Prevention Week (ACPW) 2000 is scheduled for May 13 to 19, 2000. The Communications Strategy for ACPW 2000 Plans is being developed.

The Communications Strategy for ACPW 2000 Plans has been launched with a News Release on April 28, 2000 and the new Alberta Justice Crime Prevention website at www.gov.ab.ca/just/crimeprev.

On December 1, 1999, the Justice Minister announced the provincial strategy, Focus on Crime Prevention - A Strategy for Alberta. *The new strategy set aside $400,000 for more public education on how to prevent crime, program enhancements in Models of Practice and Aboriginal initiatives, and a $200,000 Crime Prevention Grant Fund. On May 17, 2000, the Minister of Justice announced that 65 crime prevention projects were approved for provincial funding. These innovative projects are located in municipalities across the province.*

Strategy A3: Alberta Justice, in cooperation with the federal government, will implement the National Crime Prevention Strategy in Alberta. The strategy will enhance community safety through public education, project development in local communities, and research and evaluation.

Status:

Complete ☑

There are four components to this strategy. A brief update on the two with most recent impact on Alberta follows:

Community Mobilization Program (CMP): The Alberta Joint Management Committee has met four times to review applications. As of May 2000, 73 projects in Alberta have received funding, totaling over $2.59 million. On November 29 and 30, 1999, the JMC held a Strategic Planning Session to

In progress ☐ *address gaps in service and future directions for the CMP in Alberta. The Federal Minister of Justice has made funding announcements for 28 projects in Alberta totaling $844,868.*

On hold ☐

Crime Prevention Investment Fund: Three projects in Alberta have received funding - Edmonton received funding for two projects totalling $900,000 over 3 years (Success by 6's Healthy Families and Classroom on Wheels). Calgary's Co-ordinated Domestic Violence Project also received funding in excess of $900,000 over four years.

Strategy A4: The Maintenance Enforcement Program was provided with an additional $1.5 million in the current budget to implement the recommendations of the *MLA Review of the Maintenance Enforcement Program and Child Access.*

Status: *Changes to MEP are underway. This is expected to be a multi-year project, which includes enhanced client services and more staff.*

Complete ☐

In progress ☑

On hold ☐

Strategy A5: Alberta Justice was given an additional $1.5 million in the current budget to amalgamate the existing computer systems in the court and prosecution areas. These enhancements will expedite the flow of information in the system.

Status: *Justice is proceeding with the development of this project. It is scheduled for implementation in December 2000.*

Complete ☐

In progress ☑

On hold ☐

Strategy A6: Since the implementation of the *Victims of Crime Act*, direct payments to victims have significantly increased, while application decision times have decreased. Alberta Justice will continue to monitor and evaluate services for crime victims to ensure maximum benefits are provided to victims from the Victims of Crime Fund.

Status: *In 1999/2000, the Victims of Crime Financial Benefits Program completed its second full fiscal year of operation. It realized marked case load volume increases over the previous year and continued to realize significant service delivery improvements over the historical activity patterns the former Crimes Compensation Board. There were 941 new applications in 1999/2000, an increase of 28% over the previous year and nearly triple the volume of the former board. Total awards paid on financial benefit cases were $5.9 million with another $1.1 million paid on active cases inherited from the former board. Total payments to victims were about four times the historical annual payments by the former board.*

Complete ☑

In progress ☐

On hold ☐

Strategy B1: Implementation of summit recommendations will be achieved, wherever possible, through the strategic reinvestment of existing resources. Any initiatives requiring new money will be prioritized for government consideration as part of the business planning process.

Status:

For the 2000-01 fiscal year, Alberta Justice has allocated $14.7 million in additional funds to assist with the implementation of our strategic objectives as outlined in the 2000-03 Justice Business Plan. These strategic objectives include:

Complete ☐

In progress ☑

On hold ☐

- *Support for Families: consolidation and streamlining of family law legislation and court processes ($3.4 million)*
- *Youth Justice Initiatives: implementation of the* Youth Criminal Justice Act, *participation in joint initiatives aimed at early intervention ($2.9 million)*
- *Improving Our Courts: earlier case resolution strategies through early case screening and the determination of restorative forms of diversion; the establishment of public assistance units in Crown Offices to respond to the needs of victims; development of an early alternative dispute resolution program for civil disputes. ($2.4 million)*
- *Restorative Justice Approaches: establishment of new Youth Justice Committees, consideration of the transfer of community corrections program management to willing Aboriginal communities, and the examination of restorative justice alternatives ($0.5 million)*
- *First Nation Policing and Prosecutions: promote culturally sensitive approaches to prosecutions by developing the mandate of the native liaison prosecutor, improve access to Aboriginal awareness programs ($1.1 million)*
- *Enhanced Services for Victims: augment crime prevention strategies, review legislation from a victim's perspective, work with police services to standardize recruitment, selection and training of police officers to reflect cultural and social diversity ($2.9 million)*
- *Corporate Strategies: leadership development, develop an integrated information system, improve public understanding and knowledge about the justice system ($1.5 million)*

[Previous Theme] **[Back to Introduction]**